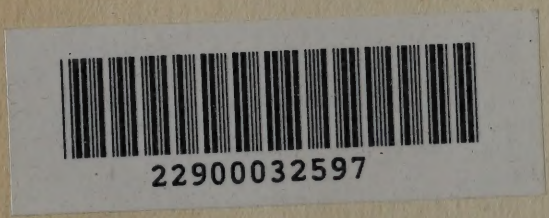
B4aa
1914

The Middlesex Hospital Journal.

Andrew Borde and his Medical Works.

By Hector A. Colwell.

B.XXIV
Boz



WELLCOME
LIBRARY
General Collections
P
2947

B408/P.N.36294

THE

# Middlesex Hospital Journal.

JULY, 1911.

## ANDREW BORDE AND HIS MEDICAL WORKS.

By Hector A. Colwell.

To have written three books which were held in the highest esteem by one's contemporaries is at any time a noteworthy achievement; when the further fact is added that they were written within a century of the invention of printing, the feat is still more remarkable. The three books in question are the "Introduction of Knowledge," the "Dietary of Health," and the "Breviary of Health." Their author is Andrew Borde "of Physicke doctor." It is with the "Breviary" and "Dietary" that we are mainly concerned at present. The Dietary is a compendium of information about food, building, sanitation, and what may be termed domestic economy. The Breviary treats of diseases and their cures in a series of short paragraphs, in which the various ailments are arranged in alphabetical order. It was the first book on medicine originally written in the English language, though the idea of both the Breviary and Dietary seems to have been taken from two earlier and smaller works which were first written in Latin, though English translations were published by Caxton under the titles of the "Gouernayle of Helthe" and the "Medecyne of ye Stomacke." The authorship of the "Gouernayle" is attributed to John de Burdeaux, a medical writer of the fourteenth century; while the "Medecyne" is referred to the pen of Lydgate, and in one MS. is mentioned as "the

diatory made by the Monk of Bury." In general the advice given is fairly sound, and both books are largely compilations from the "Regimen Sanitatis Salernitanum."

Borde's works are much more exhaustive in their treatment of the subjects considered than are these earlier volumes, and are written in a racy and, at times, humorous style. He is fond of talking about himself and his experiences, so that in reading his pages one feels oneself brought almost into personal contact with various phases of sixteenth-century life. Sometimes the author's name is spelled Boorde and at others Borde, this being quite in accordance with the variable orthography of the period. Where extracts from Borde's works are given in the present Paper, I have generally taken the liberty of modernizing the spelling, though endeavouring to retain as far as possible the quaint style of the original.

Of the actual facts concerning Borde's life we know little, except what can be gleaned from his books and letters; the latter were mostly addressed to Thomas Cromwell, and have fortunately been in great part preserved. He was born at Borde's Hill, near Cuckfield in Sussex, probably about 1490, and seemingly educated at Oxford. Before he came of age he was admitted a Carthusian monk. Carthusianism was, however, not to his taste, and in 1521 he obtained a dispensation to act as suffragan to Bishop Sherburne of Chichester, though he never either received episcopal orders or exercised the duties of the post. In 1528 we find him writing to the Prior of Hynton that he is unable to abide the "rugorositie" of the Carthusians, and in 1529 he received a further dispensation to study medicine abroad.

The fear that he might be compelled to return to the "rugorositie" of the Carthusians seems to have haunted him pretty closely, since, on more than one occasion, he writes to Cromwell reminding him of the dispensations, and, so to speak, puts himself under the protection of the then powerful statesman. In 1530 he was again in England, and, in the absence of Sir William Butts, was summoned to attend the Duke of Norfolk, as he himself tells us in a

characteristic passage in the preface to his "Dietary of Health," which was dedicated to that nobleman: "After my coming to you and feeling the pulses of your heart, the pulses of your brain, the pulses of your liver, and that I had seen your urine and egestion, I durst not to enterprise or meddle without the counsel of master Dr. Butts. But he not coming to your Grace, thanks be to God your Grace recuperating your health, and convocated through the King's goodness to wait on his prepotent Majesty, I then did pass over the seas again."

There is certainly a decided *naïveté* about the reference to the ducal excreta in the preface to a popular book, but what the passage does evidently shew is that Borde must have been fairly well known at court. He does not appear to have been regularly appointed one of the royal physicians, for though the household accounts of Henry VIII. shew payments made to other members of the faculty, Borde's name does not figure in the list. He returned to England from this second journey abroad, and in 1534, together with the rest of the brethren of the Charterhouse, was imprisoned for non-conformity to the Royal Supremacy. The necessary declarations were nevertheless soon made, and on May 29th he was set at liberty.

After a visit to Cromwell at his house in Hampshire, a third journey abroad was undertaken. It was while upon this series of travels that he sent Cromwell the first specimens of rhubarb seed (from Barbary) which ever arrived in England. This was more than two hundred years before its introduction for regular cultivation in 1742.

During this third set of travels he made his visit to the celebrated shrine of St. James Compostella. Falling in with a company of English and Scotch pilgrims at Orleans he endeavoured to dissuade them from their enterprise, but on their persisting in their intention Borde accompanied them. The journey was apparently of unusual difficulty, both from the badness of the roads and from scarcity of victuals, and the "Introduction to Knowledge" records how "with great hunger we did come to Compostella, where we had plenty of meat and wine, but in returning

through Spain, for all the craft of physic that I could do, they died all by eating of fruits and drinking of water, [from] the which I did ever restrain myself."

Borde, as may be seen from this and other passages in his writings, was no friend to water-drinking; ale, according to him, is the natural drink for an Englishman, and when this is not to be had he recommends light wines, of which, by the way, he seems to have been a pretty fair judge: "Choose your wine after this sort: it must be fine, fair, and clear to the eye; it must be fragrant and redolent, having a good odour and flavour in the nose; it must sprinkle in the cup when it is drawn or put out of the pot into the cup; it must be cold and pleasant in the mouth; and it must be strong and subtle of substance."

Regarding the value of the pilgrimage to Compostella he says, with his usual frankness, "I assure you there is not one hair or one bone of St. James at Compostella." While on his travels he was, it seems, engaged also in reporting to Cromwell the views of foreign courts respecting the King's policy in the matter of his divorce from Katherine. While in Scotland he went under the assumed name of Carr, by which means he obtained admission to the Scottish Court and to the homes of many of the nobility. His opinion of Scotsmen is by no means complimentary—"trust you no Scot, for they will use flattering words, and all is falsehood."

After a brief return to England he travelled again, and settled for a time at the celebrated university of Montpellier; during his stay he wrote the "Introduction to Knowledge," the "Dietary of Health," and the "Breviary of Health."

The "Book of the Introduction of Knowledge" was dedicated to the Princess Mary, and contained brief accounts of the countries he visited during his travels, together with specimens of over a dozen languages, spelled phonetically for English readers.

It is in this book that he gives his account of the pilgrimage to Compostella, and his opinion of its value. The work was formerly exceedingly popular, but now only a very few old copies exist; reprints were made in 1814 and 1870, the latter under the auspices of the Early English

Text Society. It was illustrated with rude woodcuts, including the one here reproduced, and labelled "Doctor Borde." It is not, however, a likeness of the Doctor, but apparently a kind of stock figure, inscribed with whatever name was convenient. The earlier printers appear to have been free in affixing names to their cuts, as other figures

DOCTOR BORDE.

*From E.E.T.S. reprint of the "Introduction of Knowledge."*

which appear in Borde's book with names suitable to the context are also found doing duty elsewhere with different names attached. So far as I am aware, we do not possess an authentic portrait of Borde.

We must now pass rapidly over the few remaining known details of his life. Between 1542 and his death in 1549 he disappears from view, except in various apocryphal legends. Numerous books and tales have been attributed to

his pen, including the nursery tale of "Tom Thumb." The term Merry Andrew is likewise said to have had its origin in Andrew Borde, from a reputed habit of his of haranguing the folk at fairs, having previously attracted attention by a series of mountebank tricks. This legend can hardly be true; it does not accord at all with the character of his known writings, and is totally inconsistent with his position as a priest, physician, and courtier.

For a time he lived at Pevensey, but the site of his house is now unknown. Dr. Richard Borde, a brother of Andrew, was vicar of Pevensey from 1520 to 1541, and in addition held the vicarage of Westham and the chantry of Northege. He was deprived in 1541, and is supposed to have died in exile. Andrew's fate was even worse than his brother's. What we certainly know about his end is that he died in the Fleet Prison in 1549. The reason for his imprisonment is still matter for dispute, which does not shew any signs of being cleared up at present. The Fleet was not reserved for debtors and the like till 1641; religious and political prisoners were both confined therein, among the former being Bishop Hooper in Mary's reign. Borde was not in debt, for he left property.

Ponet, who succeeded Gardiner as Bishop of Winchester when the latter was deprived, accuses Borde of having kept a disorderly house at Winchester, and thereby got himself into trouble. This is fairly damning evidence on the face of it, but it is only fair to say that Ponet was a most virulent and unscrupulous controversialist, had himself gone through a form of marriage with the wife of a butcher at Nottingham, from whom, according to Machyn, he was afterwards divorced "with shame enough."

Bale, Bishop of Ossory, and at one time one of Ponet's chaplains, also attacks Borde. Probably, however, to be attacked by Bale would be by most decent-minded people considered rather as a compliment than a disgrace.

Anthony Wood, the sixteenth-century antiquary, vigorously defends Borde, and attributes Ponet's accusation to the fact that Borde always opposed the marriage of the clergy; this and Ponet's own matrimonial experiences may

have caused him to lash out. Wood states that the three women who were reported to be living in the house at Winchester were three patients. Ponet's accusation was brought in a book printed abroad, whither he fled on the accession of Mary, so that some additional spite may have entered into it from this cause also. Here the matter remains at present. There may have been "a sad lapse at the end of a useful life," but in estimating the matter the characters of the accusers and the method of bringing the accusation should be taken into account.

Before proceeding to the examination of a few extracts from the "Breviary" and "Dietary," some notes upon the condition of the profession of medicine at the time may be of interest. The practise of physic, in common with all other learned callings, was the monopoly of the clerics, or perhaps it should be said, in many cases at least, that the doctors took orders to qualify for the benefices which were often the reward of successful practice. Dr. Gilbert Kymer, a celebrated physician of the fifteenth century, was not only beneficed, but advanced to be dean of Wimbourne Minster and treasurer of Salisbury while he was still a layman. Ecclesiastical preferments were also meted out, among others, to the celebrated Thomas Linacre and to John Chambre, both physicians to Henry VIII.

Though the universities granted degrees in medicine, the opportunities for clinical study were small, and the majority of the knowledge obtained seems to have been of that type which is now commonly known as "arm-chair" knowledge. In medicine Galen was the sole authority. The efficacy of a treatment or the demonstration of the functions of an organ depended not upon their agreement with observed fact, but with the dicta of Galen. Borde himself, in one of the prefaces to the "Breviary" addressed to physicians, refers with manifest approval to a quotation which is well worth repeating as indicating the kind of knowledge which was supposed to be essential to the making of a good physician:—

"Avenzoar saith every physician ought to know first learning and then practise; that is to say, first to have

grammar to understand what he doth read in Latin. Then to have logic to discuss or define by argumentation the truth from the falsehood, and so econverse. And then to have a rhetoric or an eloquent tongue, the which should be placable to the hearers of his word. And also to have geometry to ponder and weigh the drugs or portions, the which ought to be ministered. Arithmetic is necessary to be had concerning numeration. But above all things next to grammar a physician must have surely his astronomy to know how, when, and what time every medicine ought to be ministered. And then finally to know natural philosophy, the which consisteth in the knowledge of natural things. And all these things had, then is a man apt to study physic by speculation. And speculation obtained, then boldly a man may practise physic."

The low place given to natural philosophy was characteristic of the whole system. Certainly many of the old physicians studied alchemy, and valuable truths were stumbled across in this way; but alchemists, especially when genuine searchers after truth, ran unpleasant risks of being accused of sorcery, like our Roger Bacon. One instance, at any rate, is on record of alchemy being studied specifically as an aid to medicine, and this is the legend that the celebrated Raymond Lully (1225—1315) undertook it in order to find a cure for cancer—probably about the first instance of systematic cancer research that we possess.

Side by side with the practice of medicine there must, from early times, have been that of a more or less primitive surgery, especially during the numerous wars which formed such a prominent feature in the lives of our ancestors; the army surgeons, indeed, formed the élite of their craft. In addition to the small and select guild of surgeons there was also a barbers' guild, whose members practised surgery, and who were engaged in more or less frequent squabbles with the surgeons proper. How these worthies came to practise at all is a matter of conjecture, but certain it is that they were officially recognized as having a knowledge of leech-craft, since they were frequently appointed keepers of the city gates, one of the duties of that post being to see that

no leper entered the city. An origin for their association with surgery has, however, been suggested. The barbers are said to have assisted the clerics at surgical operations, and the supposition is by no means improbable, since even in those delightfully septic times a certain amount of "preparation" of the part to be operated upon must have been required, and so they became regular assistants. In 1163 appeared the Edict of Tours, which forbade the shedding of blood by ecclesiastics; surgery was abandoned by them in consequence, at all events for a time, and the barber assistants took over this part of the work of their masters. In 1423 an attempt was made to establish a joint faculty of medicine and surgery. This was to be under the control of a rector of medicine, assisted by two surveyors of medicine and two masters of surgery. These five were empowered to associate with themselves two apothecaries for the purpose of examining apothecaries' stores and impounding adulterated or otherwise defective drugs. Little, however, came of this mediæval conjoint board; the times were too troublous to allow of attention being devoted for long to questions of medical education. In addition to physicians, surgeons, and barbers there was also an army of quacks pure and simple, and in 1511 it was enacted that all persons desirous of practising medicine in London, or within a radius of seven miles thereof, should submit to an examination before the Bishop of London or the Dean of St. Paul's assisted (!) by four doctors of physic. The episcopal examinations do not seem to have been quite a success, as subsequent enactments of Henry's reign bitterly complain of the ignorance of doctors.

The year 1518 saw the foundation of the Royal College of Physicians, in which Linacre took a leading part; the first meetings of the new college were held at his house in Knightrider Street. In 1540 the barbers and surgeons were incorporated by royal charter as the company of barber-surgeons, a partnership which lasted till 1745. The surgeons in mediæval times occupied, generally speaking, a vastly inferior position to the physicians. As an instance of this a comparison of the salaries paid to Henry VIII.'s physician

and surgeon may be interesting. Sir William Butts, his physician, received a salary of £100 a year, which was subsequently increased by 40 marks (£26 13*s.* 4*d.*); for attendance upon the Duke of Richmond (Henry's illegitimate son) he received a further £20 per annum; and for attendance upon the Princess Mary his fee was a livery of blue and green damask for himself and two servants, and cloth for an apothecary. Thomas Vicary, in his capacity of surgeon, had £20 per annum, which, upon his promotion to be sergeant-surgeon, was raised to £26 13*s.* 4*d.*

The sale of drugs was in the hands of folk who combined the offices of grocer (or spicer) and apothecary, and it was not until 1617 that the apothecaries obtained a separate charter. The first pharmacopœia on record is attributed to Ortholf von Baierland (1477), though the first such compilation to attain a great degree of popularity was that of Valerius Cordus of Nuremberg (1542). In a previous Paper in this JOURNAL I have indicated the complex character of the old medicaments, and it will easily be seen that in the absence of an authoritative guide our ancestors ran pretty severe risks when they took their dose. The first pharmacopœia of the Royal College of Physicians did not appear till 1618.

Borde, in his "Breviary," attributes rightly enough many uterine troubles to inefficient midwives, and here we find a further addition to the episcopal functions: "In my time, as well here in England as in other regions, and of old antiquity, every midwife should be presented with honest women of great gravity to the Bishop; and that they should testify for her that [her] they do present should be a sad woman, wise and discreet, having experience and worthy to have the office of midwife. Then the Bishop, with the counsel of a doctor of physic, ought to examine her, and to instruct her in that thing that she is ignorant."

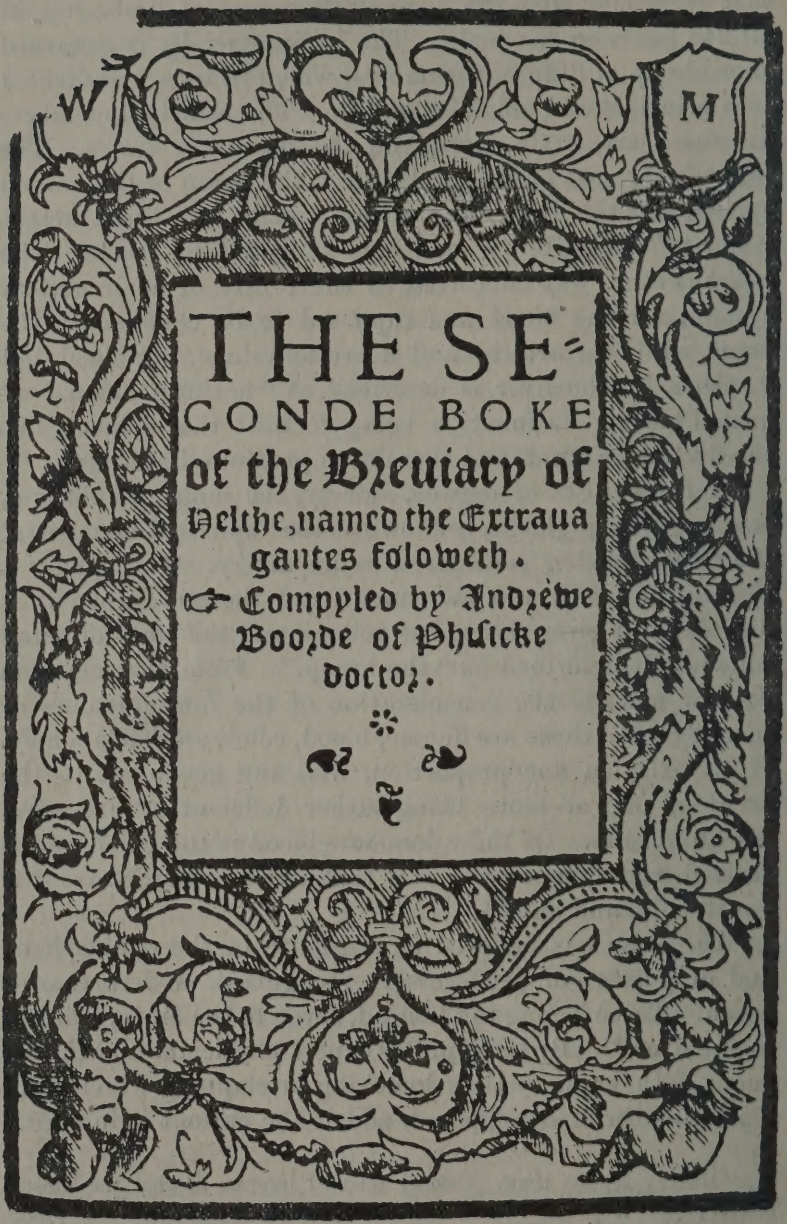
We may now proceed to an examination of some of the contents of the "Breviary," and before considering the question of diseases, glance at the anatomy and physiology of the time as set forth therein. To begin in the orthodox way with the bones, the reader is informed that there is no

bone in the body that has any feeling, except the teeth, and that every man with the normal allowance of limbs has in all 248 bones in his body. The body generally is regarded as made up of different members, which in turn are divided into principal and official members. The principal members are the heart, brain, liver, and the uterus or testes. The heart is the seat of the vital spirits, the brain of the animal spirits, and the liver of the natural spirits. In these various "spirits" the life of man was supposed to reside. The heart is in no way conceived as the centre of a circulatory system, for the blood was supposed to be confined to the veins, while the arteries and heart contained, not blood, but "spirits." The liver is described as "nothing but a congealed blood," its function being to heat the stomach like the fire under a pot, and thereby to promote digestion.

A further set of organs, namely, the lungs, diaphragm, trachea, and epiglottis, is known as the "spiritual members," the trachea being considered as an artery. The spleen is the seat of mirth and merriment, and therefore when it is disordered it gives rise to bad temper and the state of mind colloquially described as "the hump." From the members we now come to the consideration of the four humours or complexions: these are fleume, blood, coler, and melancholy. If all exist in due proportion, well and good, but in the event of one or more being either deficient or excessive, disease results. Of these humours blood is the chief, and is derived from fleume (whatever that may be—Borde says it is sweet, cold, and moist).

The pulse was believed to originate in the vital spirits, and of pulses our predecessors recognized no less than a dozen. Three belong to the head, seven to the brain, and two to the liver.* "By these pulses expert physicians and chirurgeons doth know by their knocking or clapping which principal member is distempered, and if the patient is in peril."

* History repeats itself. Colonel Waddell informs us that the Tibetan priests profess to ascertain the condition of the organs by feeling various pulses. On being asked to examine a member of the British expeditionary force to Lhasa one of them diagnosed disease of the right kidney, as the pulse from that organ was weak. ("Lhasa and its Mysteries," 377. London, 1906.)




TITLE PAGE OF THE "EXTRAVAGANTES."

*From a copy of 1547 edition.*

The first three principal members had their special "emunctory" or cleansing places. In the case of the heart they were in the axillæ; the brain had several—the eyes, nose, mouth, etc.; while to the liver were assigned the bladder, "fundament," and groins.

The veins were supposed to contain blood, and to have their origin in the liver, and as certain of the superficial veins were considered as specially associated with various internal organs, these particular vessels were to be opened when the organs in question were affected.

Borde is credited with a work on urines. None is known except an article which occupies about fourteen pages of the "Extravagantes" or second part of the "Breviary." The examination of urine was confined, of course, to a naked eye inspection, though the points to be observed are numerous enough; they are the three regions, the twenty colours, and the twenty contents, with their significations. To deal with these here would be bootless and tedious, but perhaps what is referred to as the "hypostasy" may be considered a little more fully.

Borde describes the hypostasy thus: "The hypostasy is the substance of the urine. I do not speak here of the quantity of the urine, but of the quality of the substance the which is within the urine, the which doth hang down like a pine-apple." This it will be seen is a fair description of the "mucous" deposit in urines. It was regarded as of great diagnostic importance, and such patients as desired an accurate examination of their urine were advised to send for the physician to see the urine rather than to send the urine to the physician, since the hypostasy might be broken in transit and the physician be thereby deceived. In illuminations in old MSS. the physician is usually represented as looking at a vessel of urine, which he carefully holds up to the light. It is to the credit of Borde's good sense that he does not attach much importance to such examinations, for, speaking thereon, he says, "it will lie, and the best doctor of physic of them all be deceived in an urine, and his cunning and learning not a jot the worse."

The practice of giving a diagnosis and prognosis from

the urine was known as "casting the urine," and the combined ignorance of the physicians and credulity of the public gave numerous loopholes for quackery.

Barnes, in a satirical and certainly rather coarse set of verses addressed to Borde, says :—

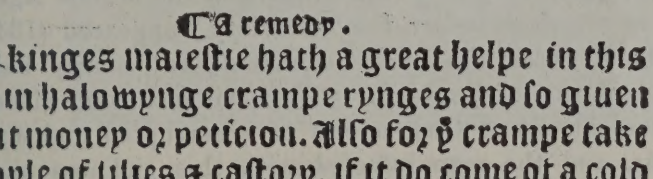
"For by castynge of a pysspotte
Ye have polled many a grote;
Yea and much more, God wotte
By falshede ye have gotte
I fere it not."

So much for our review of the anatomy and physiology. We come now to the consideration of a few of the medical paragraphs taken at random from the "Breviary." The remedy for quinsy is interesting from its primitive character, and certainly cannot be accused of involving elaborate surgical technique. The operator is directed to take a piece of fat pork, tie it to a string, and, after smearing it with olive oil, to make the patient swallow it and then to sharply withdraw it, whereby the quinsy should be broken.

Under the heading of "carcinoma" Borde describes what he calls the "sickness of the prison," which corrodes and eats the superficial parts of the body. The state of prisons in those days was truly awful, and the causes of the disease are stated as being corruption of the air, want of air, and filth. The chief remedy is "for man so to live that he deserve not to be brought into no prison. And if he be in prison, either to get friends to help him out, or else to use some perfumes, or to smell to some odoriferous savours, and to keep the prison clean." There is a record, certainly of an earlier date than Borde's time, of how two men and a woman were kept in prison awaiting trial until one man died, the other lost one foot, and the woman both feet by putrefaction; they were, however, acquitted *and permitted to depart!* Bishop Hooper's bed when he was confined in the Fleet is described as a little pad of straw with a rotten covering. It is sad to think of poor old Andrew ending his days under such conditions, and one wonders with Dr. Furnivall if he fell a victim to the "sickness of the prison."

To return to the extracts, even directions for catching fleas are included, and from the method suggested it seems plain that such unwelcome guests were tolerably numerous in the homes of our forefathers. Having recommended cleanliness and the removal of old rushes from the floors, he proceeds to advocate that a blanket should be spread upon the ground, when all the fleas will leap into the blanket and so be caught.

Under the headings of "cramp" and "morbus regius" we have references to the giving of cramp rings by the King and to the royal touch for the King's Evil. I have given facsimiles from both passages as specimens of Borde's typography and spelling. Cramp rings are supposed to date back to the reign of Edward the Confessor; large numbers were blessed by the Kings of England and apparently sometimes by the Queens-consort. Lord Berners, the translator of "Froissart," when ambassador to Spain, wrote to Cardinal Wolsey asking him to procure a supply. The cramp referred to was probably epilepsy, and most likely these rings were the forerunners of the anti-rheumatic rings sold by quacks of the present day.


A remedy.
℣ The kinges maieſtie hath a great helpe in this matter in halowynge crampe rynges and ſo giuen without money or petition. Alſo for ꝑ crampe take of the oyle of lilies & caſtory, if it do come of a cold cauſe. ℣ it do come of a hote cauſe anoynte the ſi= newes with the oile of water lilies & willowes and roſes, if it do come of any other cauſe, take of ꝑ oile of euforbium and caſtory and of piretory, and con fect or compounde all togyther and anoynt ꝑ place or places with the partes adiacent.

From the paragraph on nightmare may be gathered that frequently at any rate it was regarded as the work of evil spirits, one named Incubus troubling men, and Succubus similarly visiting women. Andrew, though mentioning this

view, himself ascribes it to a vaporous humour or "fumositie" rising from the stomach to the brain, so that though his pathology is quaintly expressed, he takes a sound common-sense view of the matter.

¶ A remedy.

¶ For this matter let euery man make frendes to the kynges maieſtie for it doth pertaine to a kynge to helpe this infyrmyte by the grace the which is geuen to a kynge anoynted, but for as muche as ſome men doth iudge diuers tymes a fyſſe or a french pocke to be the kynges euyll, in ſuch matters it be houeth nat a kynge to medle withal except it be thorow and of his bountiful goodnes to geue his pryvyl and gracious counſell. for kynges & kynges ſonnes and other noble men hath bene eximiouſe phiſicions as it appereth more largelyer in the Introduction of knowlege a boke of my makynge dedynge & pryntynge with Robert Copland.

Of the infectious diseases a large space is allotted to fevers, of which, according to Borde, there are twenty kinds. Special prominence is given to different varieties of ague which were then prevalent in England. Another disease described with some minuteness is the plague. Visitations of plague were very real dangers in the Middle Ages. Just two centuries before the "Breviary" appeared (1348-9) the Black Death had not decimated, but nearly halved the population of England. "This evil doth come either by the punishment of God or else of a corrupted and contagious air, and the man infected with this sickness may infect many men. This sickness may come also with the stench of evil dirty streets, of channels not kept clean, of standing puddles and stinking waters, of seges [privies] and stinking draughts, of shedding of man's blood, and if dead bodies be not deeply buried, of a great company being in a little or small room, of common pissing places, and of many such like contagious airs, as be rehearsed in the 'Dietary of Health.'"

Leprosy undoubtedly comprised several pathological conditions under a common heading. Borde distinguishes four kinds of leprousness, namely, Elephancia, Leonina, Alopecia, and Tiria, named after four beasts. Elephancia or "Olyphant

THE KING'S ADVENTURE.

*After Lacroix, from an MS.*

PHYSICIAN EXAMINING A SPECIMEN OF URINE.

*After Lacroix, from an MS.*

sickness" is so called because the "Olyphant" is "sturdy and hath no joints," and sufferers from elephancy are unable to move their joints, being bed-ridden in consequence. Leonina takes its name thus: "As the lion is the most fiercest of all other beasts, so is this kind of leprousness most worst of all other sicknesses, for it doth corrode and eat the flesh to the bones, and the flesh doth rot away." Alopecia or sudden falling out of the hair and beard also ranks as a leprosy, and takes its name from the Greek word for a fox, "for a fox once a year hath that infirmity, shedding his hair and having a little scurf under the hair and upon the skin." Tiria or tyre is a variety of leprosy characterized by "scabs and scales corroding the flesh," and is so named from the resemblance of the part affected to the adder's skin, "which is full of scales." Leprosy of course plays a prominent part among the diseases of the Middle Ages; lazar-houses for the reception of lepers and other sick folk occupy a prominent place in the benefactions of pious testators. As regards the management of these institutions, a Scotch Act of Parliament of the fourteenth century decrees that corrupt swine or salmon, if exposed for sale, should be seized and given to the leper folk, but if there were no lepers it was to be destroyed.

Extracts might be multiplied almost indefinitely, but perhaps the curious in such matters will forgive me for adding the following gems of medical practice:—

Nose-bleeding may be stopped by smelling pigs' dung and putting the scrotum in vinegar; in the case of a woman she should lay her breasts in vinegar, after smelling the same savoury dose recommended for the male sufferer. The section on teeth is not pleasant reading from the point of dental hygiene: "Toothache may come either from a humour descending from the head, or by corroding by worms, or corruption lying between and upon the teeth." The cure for toothache certainly savours of a practical joke, but so that there be no mistake here it is in the author's own words, spelling and all: "Make a candell of waxe with henbane seedes and light it, and let the perfume of the candyl enter into ye toth, and gape ouer a

dysshe of colde water, and than may you take the wormes out of the water and kyl the[m] on your nayle, the worme is a lytle greater than ye worme in a man's hande."

A few words about the treatment of lunatics must conclude our sketch of the "Breviary." Pictures and tapestries are to be banished from the sick-room, all things are to be of a sweet savour, and the patient must be kept from musing and studying. He must be amused and kept from injuring himself or others, but he must also be kept in fear of one man, and, if needs be, of another; when necessary he must be punished and beaten. In a long chapter on demoniacal possession our author relates how, when he was in Rome, a woman was taken to St. Peter's that the devils which possessed her might be exorcised; he, however, did not wait for the whole business, but, remembering what happened to certain pigs upon an occasion recorded in Scripture, discreetly withdrew.

The foregoing extracts have naturally been chosen because of their quaintness, but it is only fair to Borde to say that he generally shews sound good sense. The weird remedies are the outcome of a blind groping after cures for diseases of whose pathology the physician was ignorant. In the "Dietary" especially his common sense is strongly to the fore, and even in the "Breviary" he ventures to controvert a statement of Aristotle and to supply an alternative theory of his own.

Some of the statements in the "Dietary" are as true to-day as when they were written, and are indeed quite up to date. Thus, as regards building, the house is to be built near a good supply of fresh water, away from marshy soil, and so situated that a plentiful supply of fresh air is available. Urinals and privies are to be far away from the house, whose owner is further advised not to empty "pysse-pottes" in the chimneys. The practice of emptying these vessels out of windows has been made familiar to us by Hogarth, but perhaps it is not so well known that on one occasion the practice in question led the operator to a prebendal stall. Louis IX. of France was on his way to matins in the small hours of the morning when a certain

scholar opened his window, emptied his chamber-pot, and the contents descended on the King's head. So far from shewing annoyance at the unexpected shower-bath, the King was so pleased at the diligent scholar's early rising that he made him a prebendary. So much for tastes. History does not relate whether the monarch returned home or proceeded to church; one hopes the former.

We will conclude with Borde's remarks upon drinking water. Rain water is the most wholesome, then come running and river waters. Well water is not so good, and standing waters are distinctly bad. Could anything be broadly truer in rural districts at the present day? As Dr. Furnivall remarked, either Borde's contemporaries knew much more about sanitation than we give them credit for, or Borde himself was far in advance of his times.